

Abstract of the Disclosure

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An asymmetric network communication system for use in a client-server environment having independent forward and return channels operating at different speeds and/or under different protocols on the same or different communication media to provide efficient utilization of shared resources. A network manager, such as a hybrid access system, effects transmission of packetized data on a forward (downstream) channel from the host server to multiple client devices coupled with a shared downstream media at 10 or more megabits per second while simultaneously providing selectable multiple lower speeds of operation on shared or dedicated return (upstream) channels from the client devices to the host server depending on bandwidth availability, bandwidth demand, service level authorization, etc. for the return channel. Forward and return channels may be located on the same or different communication medium including a CATV network, direct broadcast satellite network, television or radio RF broadcast network, wireless or mobile cellular facilities or the like. The return channel may reside on a PSTN either directly coupled with the host server or connected with the network manager for subsequent transmission to the host server. The network manager handles or controls the forward and return communication to establish interactive full-duplex real-time network sessions between the host and a selected client device.